

Chapter XI

Notes

R,P,S/E discuss loss of P's glasses
no way to light fire
have assembly – R angry about actions of J's group
P makes speech, determined to go to J with conch and ask for glasses back
P counts on power of conch and 'what is right'
S/E worry about consequences – J's group will be more powerful
R,S/E argue about whether to wear paint. R insists not 'because we aren't savages'

When R's group arrive at Castle Rock, challenged by Roger, guarding cliff
When J appears, R accuses him of being 'thief'
J orders capture of S/E as prisoners
R, J fight
P intervenes, with conch
P asks 'which is better, to have rules and agree or hunting and breaking things up?'
Roger sends rock down cliff, knocks Piggy into sea and smashes conch
P's body washed to sea
J tells R 'I meant that'
R escapes, despite spears thrown by hunters
J starts to torture S/E, Roger 'pushes him aside' in order to torture them himself

Things to Notice

1. Piggy has changed his response to Simon's death at the beginning of this chapter. Now he says it was 'murder'. What is the reason for this?
2. Piggy has great faith in the power of the conch. He believes it is 'the one thing (Jack) hasn't got' and that it will make Jack realise he should return the glasses because 'what's right is right'. Piggy is showing genuine courage but also an inability to understand the full extent of what the boys are capable of.
3. There is, of course, a huge significance in the fact that, almost exactly at the point of Piggy's death, the conch 'explodes into a thousand pieces'. Jack is clever enough to realise the importance of the conch to Ralph's group ; 'there isn't a tribe for you anymore, the conch is gone.' With the death of Piggy and loss of the conch, all power is now with Jack.
4. Roger's role is fully revealed. He is the killer of Piggy. He sends the rock with 'delirious abandonment', suggesting that all influence of civilisation in him has gone. The author describes him as possessing 'the hangman's horror', reminding us of cold-blooded killers in concentration camps. He is also desperate to torture Sam and Eric, who are now Jack's prisoners.